

How to use Digital Marketing to stand out from the crowd, grow your brand, gain customers and live the good life



primePIXELS

"The authoritative guide on how SMEs can use digital marketing to gain customers"
- Neil Finne, CEO and Founder of Corkscrew, The Start-Up School

Why did we write **this** guide?

After speaking with hundreds of independent financial advisers, small business owners and entrepreneurs we discovered in nearly all cases that what you want from digital marketing is simple: a one stop strategy combining social media, SEO, website optimization and paid advertising that attracts paying customers.

Of course, there's a lot more you can do around each area, but according to nearly all of our clients, their main priority is a simple, cost effective strategy that delivers results immediately. Our strategy is simple, but powerful and it really works.

As budgets grow it makes sense to increase focus on particular areas that while having a longer payback period, ultimately drive customer acquisition costs down. A great example of this is SEO and brand building through social media.

Note:

We have assumed a basic understanding of the key areas discussed in this guide. Additional resources are provided at the back for those seeking a deeper understanding of digital marketing.





How can digital marketing gain you customers?

We have proven that by combining digital marketing activities into one strategy you can multiple their singular effects 10x over.

- **Step 1:** We will show you how your potential customers find you online and use the online space to reach a decision about whether to buy from you or not.
- **Step 2:** We will tell you how to use different marketing activities to become more visible online and positively influence your customer journey.
- **Step 3:** We will show you how to combine all of the different marketing activities to create one clear, definitive strategy.

“At least 80% of consumers use the Internet to make their search for information a whole lot easier and convenient”

- *Business 2 Community*

Your typical customer journey

Understanding your customer, where they live online and how they interact with you is a critical part of any marketing strategy.

While there are 1000's of industries and business sectors, the way most of our customers reach us is mostly the same and its from our understanding of this customer journey that we have created an effective digital marketing strategy, which we will share with you in this guide. By looking at each phase of the journey, optimizing and combining it with the other phases we can create real and measurable success.



Discovers your website through SEO, social, paid search content.



Compares your offering with your competitors





Visits your social media for proof of your quality.



Returns to your website.



Fills in a C2A.



Converts to a customer.

The chart indicated shows the following phases:

1.

Your customer finds your website through any of / a combination of the following:

Aside from word of mouth (and congrats if you are getting most of your growth from that channel) 90% of your customers will be, or should be finding you through:

- **Natural search** - Google/Bing search results
- **Social** - you (and we mean you individually) or your financial advisory brand mentioned or talked about on social media.
- **Content** - your blog posts and content being shared on social media and other business websites.
- **Paid Search** - paid ads on Google or social media

Your typical **customer journey**

2.

Your customers compare your offering with your competition:

- **Options** - They will look at between 3 and 5 different options
- **Influences** - They will be influenced by the quality of your website, ease of use, speed, content and USP.
- **Comparisons** - They will compare prices and features

3.

If your website design, content and technical ease make users feel engaged and comfortable, and your prices and/or features are competitive, customers will typically look for social proof that you are what you say you are. In our opinion, for any business one of the most effective and often overlooked uses of social media is how it proves to potential customers that your goods/services are worth the money. The customer will look for:

- **Online reviews** - Are you aware of where your customers are reviewing you online? Are you engaging with negative responses and encouraging happy customers to review you?
- **Positive social media discussions** - From your past / current customers. Are you encouraging this activity?
- **Content** that proves you know what you are talking about. Are you regularly writing blog posts and contributing as a trustworthy, authoritative source on other industry relevant blogs?
- **Relatability** - Customers look at the person/people behind the brand or company to see if they can relate to them on a personal level.



Your typical **customer journey**

4.

Customer returns to your website.

Top Tip: Your brand name needs to be easily found on Google. Most returning visitors will type your brand name into Google. If its not the first result, there will be immediate distrust. Use paid advertising around your brand name until SEO for your brand name comes into effect.

5.

Customer fills in a C2A.

- **Information** - You still need to get your customer to fill in a form that gives you the information you need to contact them. Play around with the fields you require, the general rule of thumb is that less is more. Only ask for what you really need to get your customer on the phone and make the sale.
- **Differences** - People are different. Some will never give out there phone number so live chat can work well. Some want further information that proves you know what you are talking about so maybe produce a guide like this one. Some want to speak to someone immediately. Is your phone number clearly visible?

Top Tip: Make sure your sales team/you are ready to convert all the leads!

Digital marketing for SME's

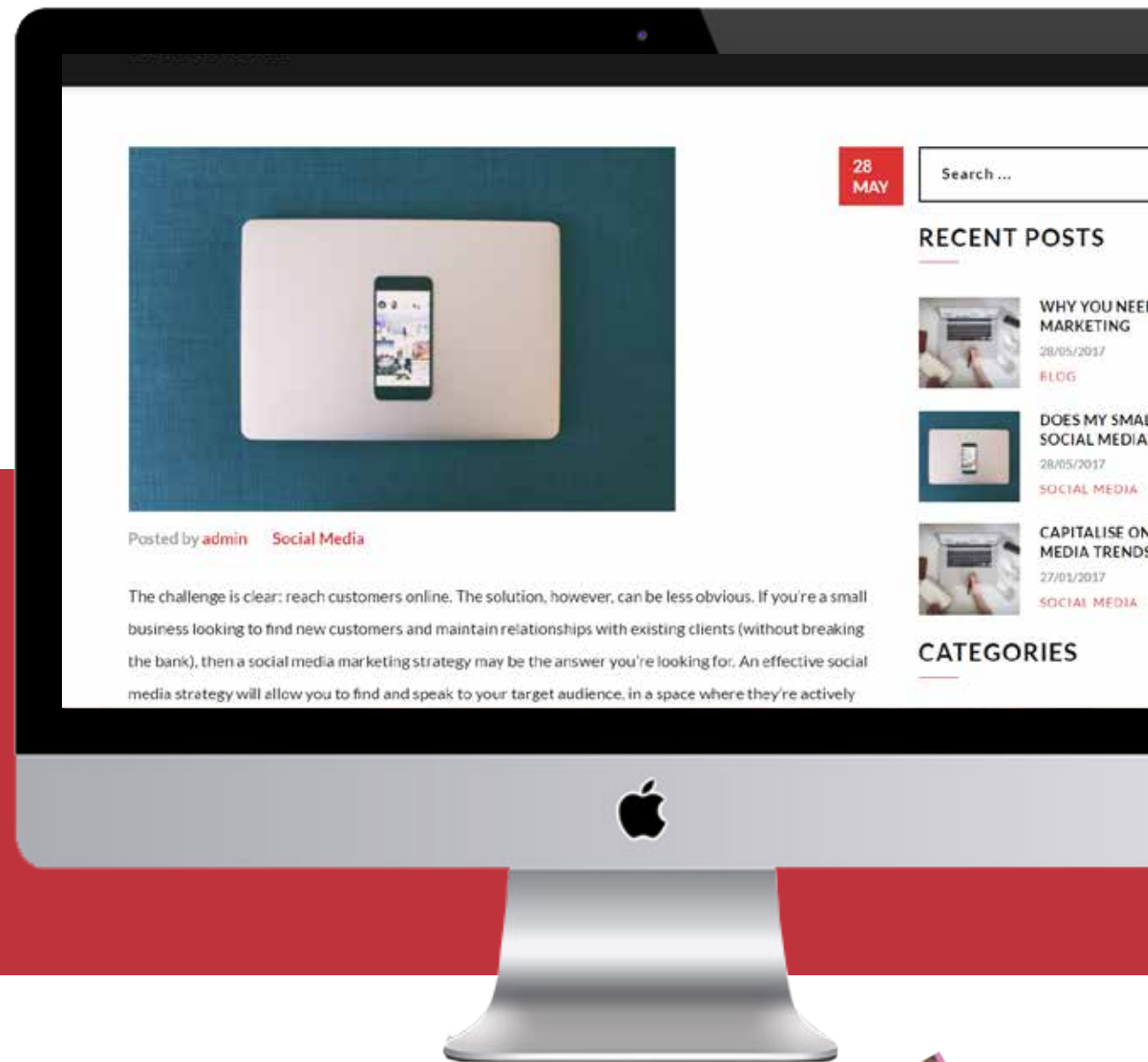
“ To realise the massive potential of digital marketing one must combine all its segments in one strategy. While they can work independently their full value is multiplied x10 when they are made to work together. Much like any ecosphere, they are intrinsically interlinked”

By the author: Richard Walton



“Given 15 minutes to
consume content, two-
thirds of people would
rather read something
beautifully designed than
something plain”

- Adobe



Step 1: Start with your website

By now you should have seen the importance of optimizing all aspects of your customer journey. Before we tell you how to get found online, it's critical you review your website.

There is no point in driving lots of traffic and potential customers to your site if it is not optimized to convert that traffic into paying customers



You need to:

- Make sure your website is optimized for mobile.
- Make sure the user journey provides key information.
- Analyze your top landing pages: how easy is it for visitors to get in contact with you? What entices them to sign up? What do they like and don't like about your site?
- Analyze your current "Calls to Action" (ways that visitors can send you their information i.e enquiry form) and specially look at conversion rates from different traffic sources and how you can improve that. You will need to install Google Analytics to understand how different C2A are performing. Test, test and test again.

Top Tip: Have a look at your competitors' websites. You can always find something to learn from them.

- If necessary create additional landing pages and install additional “Calls to Action”.
- Consider introducing incentives to get visitors to make contact with you. Free trials, free consultations, free downloads and webinars work very well.
- Then each month make sure you are continually adjusting your website to optimize it around what you are seeing in the data.

Useful tools:

- **Set your site up on Google Analytics. This allows you to track your website’s performance and traffic’s effectiveness.**
- **Make sure your website is set up correctly on Google search console. Amongst many things this allows you to see if anything is wrong with your site.**

“39% of people will stop engaging with a website if images won’t load or take too long to load”

- Adobe

SEO

“Search is the #1 driver of traffic to content sites, beating social media by more than 300%. 75% of users never scroll past the first page of search results”



How to drive leads to your site - **SEO**

If you are not listed in the top 10 for any of your top keywords you will not be getting any organic search traffic from Google/Bing. Ideally you need to be in the top 3.

SEO is a long game, but it's really important. You won't see any results for a while, but when you do you will be getting visitors and clients for free.

As such, for those wanting to drive down their customer acquisition cost over time, a solid SEO campaign is vital.

Choosing keywords: If you are struggling to get found through natural search a common issue is the competitiveness of your chosen keywords. Getting found regularly for keywords with 50% less volume than your ideal core keyword is 100x better than not getting found at all. Use a SEO tool like SEMrush to analyze your competitors keywords, where you rank and keyword ranking difficulty. We suggest starting out with 5 to 10 "core" keywords if you're new to SEO.

Getting started with SEO: We break down SEO into 2 parts. Onsite and Offsite.

Onsite SEO

Onsite content: The most important aspects for SEO are..

- *The length of time visitors spend on your site*
- *Pages per session*
- *Bounce rate.*

Your success in these areas will be linked to the quality of content on your website and its relationship with your traffic sources.



To improve these critical areas of SEO you can:

1. Improve the relevance of the content to the visitor. Aside from better informative content, page design and links to other sources can help here. Blogs and onsite video can be really useful in keeping visitors engaged.
2. Source better traffic (it's not always the quality of content that's the issue but potentially it's the result of poor paid advertising and other poor traffic sources)

Technical SEO – you will almost certainly have to outsource this. Find a reputable SEO technical expert who can analyze the structure of your website. They will report back on things such as quality of backlinks, toxic score, speed of page load, url structure, H1 tags etc. They should also report on what's critical and what's best practice.



How to get started:

- Engage with influencers in financial industries on social media.
- Participate in online discussions to show off your expertise
- Share your blog and other useful ideas on social media
- Approach industry relevant blogs and online publications and offer to write articles on topics you have experience on. Don't try and sell your services just offer your advice and write useful articles that are relevant to that blog and its target audience
- Create a free financial advisory guide that people might want to share and post online.

Top Tip:

The key point to remember when building backlinks (links to your site from other locations) is that your backlink profile must look natural in that people are linking to your site because it's a valuable resource. It's a huge red flag if all the links you get are the same type. For example, if your backlink profile shows a lot of guest posts. Always mix up a backlink strategy with citations, business directories, blog comments, forum posts, video sites and social media. Keep it real!

Offsite SEO

This refers to your efforts away from your website and again its all about content, linking in beautifully with a solid social media strategy.



Paid Search

“Businesses make an average of \$2 in income for every \$1 they spend in AdWords”

- *Google*

“92% of marketers advertise on Facebook”

- *Socialbakers*



How to drive leads to your site - Paid Search

Types of Paid Search

Your first question is probably going to be: On which platform should I concentrate my budget? It's almost impossible to know the answer in advance, so testing is a requirement for anyone spending money on paid search/social.

Let's start with the big four:

1. Google:

- Search: This allows you to place ads on Google, targeted to the exact services/products people are searching for.
- Similar to search but with Google partners
- Retargeting: Puts ads in front of people who have visited your site in the past. This can be a highly effective low cost strategy.

2. Facebook:

Generally a lot lower cost than Google, Facebook lets you target customers according to demographic makeup and interests. The biggest difference to Google paid advertising is that lead conversion rates are generally lower as the viewer is not always looking to buy like the Google user, however the lower CPC (cost per click) normally evens this out with Google. One of the best things about Facebook is that you can add images and video to your ads, so even if people don't click on it you do benefit from great exposure for free.

Top Tip: If you know exactly who your target market is then this platform can be extremely powerful.

If you want to start generating customers immediately you have to do paid search. Quite simply, there is no other online marketing strategy that will start driving customers to your site immediately.

"Users who are retargeted are 70% more likely to convert"
- *HubSpot*

How to drive leads to your site - Paid Search

"The best Facebook ads look and feel as relevant and timely in your News Feed as the posts you see from your friends"

- *CISCION*

Top Tip: If you are running any Google ads you should replicate them on the Bing platform. While Bing has a much lower reach than Google, it generally performs just as well, if not better and for a lower CPC.

3. LinkedIn:

If you are targeting businesses and selling professional services, LinkedIn is where you need to be. Like Facebook, it's critical to know exactly who your "ideal" customer is. Note: it has the highest CPC of any of the social media platforms.

4. Instagram:

Owned by Facebook you can run Instagram ads from your Facebook Ad Manager. While relatively new, it's growing fast in terms of advertising spend. Latest research by Forrester has shown consumers are 58x more likely to engage with branded content on Instagram compared to Facebook and 120x more than on Twitter.

5. Others: Bing, Twitter, Quora, Pinterest, Snapchat

Depending on your niche and budget these platforms may also have a role to play. Do your research and test with small budgets to see what works best for you.



How to drive leads to your site - Paid Search

Things that effect paid search results:

- 1. Quality of your ads:** think copy, tag lines, images. Spend time on this, it makes a BIG difference.
- 2. USP:** what are you offering that's different to your competitors? Try and squeeze your USP into your ads.
- 3. Your customer:** where do they live online, what are they doing and when? Are they on Facebook or LinkedIn? When are they most likely to buy?
- 4. Length of customer decision process:** for those with customers who spend a long time making a decision, it can be difficult to effectively track paid search conversion rates.

Top Tip: We can't emphasize enough how important it is to do your research. Every platform will work differently depending on your target audience, offering and other factors. So test and optimize to make sure you are getting the highest return on your investment.

Social Media

“Reading or writing social media reviews and comments will influence the shopping behavior of 67% of consumers”
- *PwC*



How to drive leads to your site - **Social Media**

Why you need social media

- **Trust** - A well run social media account with engagement and an active community goes a long way in gaining potential customers trust in your brand. It can make all the difference between choosing to go with you or a competitor.
- **SEO** - Social media plays a key role in building your natural online presence, SEO. Google tracks the number of your followers, shares, engagement and much more.
- **Social Advertising** - Paid advertising on social media platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn can have great results in getting you new customers, but you need an active social media platform to get started!
- **Community** - without social media you do not have a place to engage with your loyal customers and brand fans. These ambassadors play a critical role in helping you spread your company's message, convert website visitors, share content and much more.
- **Reach** - According to a study carried out by Global Web Index, a third of the time people spend online is spent on social media. Social Media is a way to talk to your customers on a platform they choose to frequent, meaning they're engaged and attentive.

Social Media Best Practice

- 1. Too many companies have too many social media channels.** You are better off doing one or two channels really really well than 5 badly. Less is more.
- 2. Be open with your customers:** tell your story and why you decided to start your business. It's much more interesting to be authentic and customers will respond well to your honesty.
- 3. Great content takes time, so reuse it.** Cut it up, and repost snippets from your best blogs.
- 4. Keep it short** -"Tweets containing less than 100 characters receive 17% higher engagement than longer Tweets."
- 5. Participate in discussions,** don't be afraid to share your opinions.
- 6. Respond to positive and negative feedback.** If you open yourself and your company up from time to time, you will get negative feedback. Respond to it and listen. Research has shown that it's actually better to have a few negative reviews with comments from the company/owner than just positive ones. Everyone knows that bad things happen sometimes.
- 7. Add value.** You need to give your audience a reason to follow you or engage with you online. Offer value through content that either teaches them something, entertains them or includes exclusive brand information or promotions. Audiences don't want to be constantly bombarded with advertisements, they want to be served relevant and beneficial content.

Top Tip: there is only one thing worse than no social media and that's a poorly managed, infrequently updated social media account. If this is you, remove your social media from your digital marketing efforts now.



Hopefully you are beginning to understand the value of combining SEO, website optimization, paid search and social media. Here is a quick recap:

1. Quality paid advertising management affects SEO.

Done properly, paid search traffic increases the quality of visitors to your site that in turn affects your bounce rate and time spent on your site, which are the two most important determinants of SEO. Source: SEMrush Ranking Factors 2017.

2. Quality social media and content impacts SEO by providing content for other websites to link to and share. It also assists with website conversions by creating a feeling of confidence and allows “social proofing”. Social proofing engages your customers online to support and “sell” your product for you.

3. Website conversion management and on page content management lowers your paid search costs and CPA (cost per acquisition).

The Power of Combination

Together we are greater than the sum of our parts

“When social media is part of their buyer’s journey, customers tend to convert at a 129% higher rate. They are also four times as likely to spend significantly more than those without a social component”

- Deloitte

Need more help?

Quote “Biz Guide” and get 25% off your first month’s business growth package with Prime Pixels and a free website home page redesign worth £395

<https://primepixels.media>



Measure it

There are A LOT of things you can measure, but here are some key ones to get you started:

1. Website

- Bounce rates
- Time on site
- Pages visited per session
- Goal conversions

Tool: Google Analytics

2. SEO

- Position tracking for your top 5 keywords in comparison to your competitors.
- Organic traffic growth
- Backlink growth
- Website health

Tool: SEMrush, Google Search Console



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Top Tip: Every audience is different. If your ideal buyer isn't hitting certain key metrics you are tracking, but is still closing, don't beat yourself up about it. Track what makes sense for you.

3. Social Media

- **Engagement** is the key measure. Engagement measures the amount of likes, shares, and comments that your social updates receive.
- **Leads** - how many leads to your site is your social media generating?
- **Share of voice** – compared to direct competitors, how strong is your brand presence on social media? Is your business top of mind for audiences on social media?

Tool: *Hootsuite, Canva*

4. PPC

- **Click Through Rate (CTR)** - CTR is a measure of your ads effectiveness.
- **Conversion Rate** - How many people who click, fill in a CTA on your website?
- **Cost Per Acquisition (CPA)** - how many of your ads convert to paying clients? Can you afford to pay that rate?
- **Cost Per Click (CPC)**- price paid for each click of an ad.
- **Quality Score**- the higher a keyword's quality, the lower its cost-per-clicks (CPCs) and the better its ad position.

Tool: *Adwords Editor*

Check List

in order of priority

- ☐ 1. Run a technical SEO audit
- ☐ 2. Optimize your website
- ☐ 3. Get yourself set up on Google Analytics and a SEO and social media monitoring platform
- ☐ 4. Choose your Keywords– Pick 5 to 10 and focus on them
- ☐ 5. Start brand name paid advertising
- ☐ 6. Start a blog and include your core keywords only when relevant
- ☐ 7. Choose 1 or 2 social media accounts and engage and post regularly. Less is more!
- ☐ 8. Encourage your customers to write reviews and talk to potential customers online. Thank the people who do take the time to review!
- ☐ 9. Start paid advertising on Google and social media. Start small, test, optimize and grow.
- ☐ 10. Engage with influencers in your industry on social media
- ☐ 11. Participate in online discussions to show off your expertise
- ☐ 12. Become a regular contributor on guest websites, blogs, industry publications
- ☐ 13. Measure it
- ☐ 14. Track your progress, week by week, month by month

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Final Words

Be patient, it will take some time to get this right, but if you stick to the principles laid out in this guide, measure your results, test and measure, and test again, **you will reap the benefits.**



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Deepen your knowledge

**Great articles on how to do more
with SEO, social media and PPC,
and improve your website:**

SEO

- KPIs for SEO: measuring SEO success
- A Simple Step by Step Guide to SEO

Website

- 10 Ways to Increase Page View and Reduce Your Bounce Rate
- Call to Action: The 10 Most Effective Techniques

PPC

- <http://www.biznetdigital.net/top-8-key-performance-indicators-for-ppc-advertising/>

SEO

- How to generate leads using social media
- 10 Social Media KPIs You Should Track and Monitor

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